

DERELICT FISHING GEAR REMOVAL PROJECT



What's the Problem?

Puget Sound is littered with derelict fishing gear including nets, lines, crab pots, shrimp traps, and other recreational & commercial harvest equipment that has been lost or abandoned in the marine environment. This long-lasting marine debris poses many problems to people and to marine animals, such as entanglement and habitat degradation.

What's Being Done?

The Derelict Fishing Gear Removal Project is a pilot program to develop and test removal protocols. A toll-free hotline, a Web site, and a database have been established to receive, track and prioritize public reports of known derelict fishing gear in the state's marine waters, and to aid actual removal operations. The project's "no-fault" approach means no blame or penalties will be assessed against anyone for loss or reporting of derelict gear.

What You Can Do

If you know where derelict fishing gear is located, report it by calling the WDFW Derelict Fishing Gear Hotline, using the reporting form and/or project Web site. When you encounter derelict fishing gear:

- Stay safely away from it!
- Do not attempt removal - you may actually violate state and/or federal law.
- Record as much information as you can while you're on-site, including:

Location _____
GPS coordinates &/or chart location (latitude - longitude); Water depth; Distance from nearby landmarks &/or common names for the area.

Type of Gear _____
Nets (monofilament gillnet or twine-like purse seine & trawl nets or fish farm pens); Pots/Traps (round or square, singular or multiple); Ropes/Lines; Floats; Trawl Doors; Other?

Details _____
Date and time of sighting; Your activity during sighting (beach walk, swimming, diving, boating); Type of seabed; Size of the gear; Number and type of invertebrates, fish, birds &/or marine mammals entangled or dead in the gear; Perceived level of threat to humans/passing vessels.

Contact Information _____
Your name, phone number, address, and/or Email address will be very helpful if more information is needed. However, anonymous reports will be accepted.

Report what you see _____
even if you're not sure the gear is lost or abandoned.

Also, prevent your own gear from becoming lost - fish and boat only in approved areas, know what's below you when fishing to avoid snagging, properly dispose of all broken lines/gear onshore, and always use "rot-cord" on traps and pots. Always report lost gear within 48 hours to aid removal efforts.

For more information, contact:

Northwest Straits Commission
 360-428-1084
www.nwstraits.org

WDFW Derelict Fishing Gear Hotline
 1-800-477-6224
www.wa.gov/wdfw/fish/derelict



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